

Insight

Celebrating the holiday around the world

Some of our store reporters became curious about how other countries celebrate the holiday season and this is what they found:

"As I walked through the shopping centers just before Thanksgiving, the stores were setting up their Christmas decorations and the songs of the season were being played," says Sheri Hathaway of K mart 4083, Flint, Michigan.

"How could they do that when we hadn't even given thanks for the things we are fortunate to have?"

"It wasn't too long ago when my heart beat a little faster, the twinkle in my eye was brighter and the cold wind seemed like a gentle breeze as I held my mother's hand to see Santa."

"Now as I see the crowded stores and hurried shoppers, I wonder what happened to the real Christmas of long ago."

"I had a talk with my grandmother and asked her what Christmas was like when she was a young girl. This is her story."

"Grandma was born in Holland in 1886 and came to America when she was five years old. She came from a large family and learned to be thankful for the smallest gift."

"The family and relatives started preparing for Christmas a few days after Thanksgiving. Cookies were baked, decorations were made from the simplest of things like pine cones, acorns, dried berries and material left over from my mother's sewing."

"The gifts were homemade. They were crafted with love and as secretly as possible. The hard part of the whole thing was finding a place to hide them until they were finished and wrapped."

"The girls of the family learned to sew and knit at a very early age. On her thirteenth Christmas, Grandma woke early to start breakfast and as she passed the tree, she noticed a very large present that hadn't been there when she retired. She stepped closer and looked at the name tag — it was for her?"

"She was so excited, she fixed breakfast in a few minutes. She could hardly wait for the great moment. When it finally came, she felt every eye in the room on her and her gift."

"She gently removed the wrapping and as her eyes beheld the gift, tears slowly appeared."

"It was a quilting frame that her uncle and father had made by hand. She had always wanted one, but never really thought her wish would come true."

Christmas in Yugoslavia, England, Latvia

Sonja Kavedzic of K mart 3286, Brunswick, Ohio, and her family came to America in 1973 from Novi Sad, Yugoslavia. She loves everything about Christmas in America, which is celebrated quite differently than in her country.

In Yugoslavia the cities and towns aren't decorated with pretty decorations. On Christmas Eve they decorate their tree with candy. They don't give presents as we know it, rather they have fruit and candy.

Sonja also adds that she likes the 7 to 10 days vacation from school in America better than the 1 or 2 days off from school in Yugoslavia.

Mary Robertson also of 3286 was born in Halifax, England. Christmas is traditionally the same in both countries, with only a few differences. On Christmas Eve, Mom and Dad put sixpences in the plum pudding. Letters to Santa are put up the chimney. The children also get a cracker that you pull apart and small toys and a party hat are inside.

Irene Fultz of 3286 was born in Madliena, Latvia. One custom she brought back to this country is that on Christmas Eve she bakes a Christmas bread. The bread is eaten on Christmas and is believed to bring you good luck throughout the year.

Store Reporter James Blankenship

Season greetings from the Philippines

When everyone is celebrating a white Christmas in the heart of the Midwest, in the Philippines the palm trees are blowing gently in the tropical winds according to Corazon Hidalgo Burch of K mart 7214, Winona, Minnesota. Only in early morning or evening will it become cool enough to wear a sweater.

There are hundreds of islands that form the country of the Philippines. The Philippine Islands are located some seven thousand miles west of North America.

At Christmas we also celebrate the birth of Christ, and visit friends and family.

Most everyone in the Philippines are of the catholic faith. The Christmas celebration begins on December 16th, that is when *Aginaldo Mass* starts. Early masses are held everywhere, and are climaxed on December 24th by an elaborate midnight service.

In my province of La Union on the Island of Luzon, which is the most northern part of the Philippines main island, youngsters sing Christmas carols about town. The dressmakers are very busy at this time of the year because for many it is the time to change the old wardrobe for something new. I remember when I was a little girl, I would stay up late to help my Aunt do the sewing. I often did the hemming, button holes, and sewed the buttons on the new dresses she made.

We also have pine trees in the Philippines, but very few, and it is illegal to cut them. So we try to find a tree with many branches and then we cut just one branch from it. We put the branch into a stand of some kind, and then we wrap green crepe paper all over the branches of it. We try to make the tree look like it has snow on it. We soak a white bar of soap in water, and we stir it to make rich suds. The suds are then sprinkled all over the tree, and when the suds are dry it looks as white as snow, at least we imagine it to be so. Many people are busy making decorations for the Christmas tree.

Many people in the Philippines make a very popular Christmas decoration out of bamboo, into the shape of a star, it is wrapped with red and white tissue with silver trimmings. The stars are often like a lantern with a light bulb or a candle inside the three dimensional star. These stars hang in almost every home. Often times the stars have long streamers hanging from them, and some stars are hung over nativity scenes fashioned from rice stalks. The figures in the nativity scenes are usually bought, and made of ceramic material.

On Christmas eve there is usually a party while everyone waits for the midnight mass to

start. The churches are beautifully decorated, with the manger scene, wreaths on the walls, stars hanging from ceilings, and from plum trees.

On Christmas day many friends, neighbors, and relatives get together to share dinner. We usually have a roast pig (lechon) roasted over live coals, various cooked vegetables, fruits, and rice cake (suman), which are wrapped in coconut or banana leaves. We also serve coffee, tea, and chocolate milk at this abundant Christmas dinner.

Christmas is also the time for the children to go to their godparent's home to pay their respects. The children show their respect by kissing their godparent's hand, wishing them a merry Christmas, and exchanging gifts. The children usually receive clothing or money which makes them very happy.

It really is a special time in the Philippines during Christmas and with the weather average of upper fifties to seventies, it is very different from a Midwest Christmas. Though I miss the Christmas season, family, and friends in the Philippines, so I would also miss the snow and the fresh scent of the pine trees of the West, I will admit.

Store Reporter Jeannie Schick

How to create a braided Christmas rope

Bookkeeper Judy Busic of K mart 3124, Corona, California, gives demonstrations on how to make a perfect decoration with ease. All of the materials can be purchased at K mart, to make a braided Christmas rope.



Judy Busic of 3124 and her Christmas rope

You will need:

1 skein heavy rug yarn (red)

Plastic cafe-curtain ring (3/4")

Size E crochet hook

small amounts of Sayelle yarn (red, green or white)

3 candy canes

ROPE

Roll rug yarn into a ball. Measure out 20 two yard pieces of yarn. Fold in half and slide the ring up one side to the middle. Tie with a small piece of yarn under ring and around the tip of the rope. Divide evenly into three sections and braid loosely to within four inches of the bottom. Tie bottom with another small piece of yarn. Trim tassel evenly.

WREATH - red, green or white yarn (crocheting)

Chain 12; join to form circle. Chain 3, double crochet 23 times in circle; join with slip stitch to top of chain 3. Chain 3, skip 1

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